

REMARKS

The examiner is thanked for the performance of a thorough search. By this amendment, Claims 1, and 16-19 have been amended. Claims 3-5 have been cancelled, and no claims have been added. Hence, Claims 1-2, and 6-31 are pending in the application. The amendments to the claims as indicated herein do not add any new matter to this application. Furthermore, amendments made to the claims as indicated herein have been made to exclusively improve readability and clarity of the claims and not for the purpose of overcoming alleged prior art.

Each issue raised in the Office Action mailed February 26, 2009 is addressed hereinafter.

I. ISSUES NOT RELATING TO PRIOR ART— OBJECTION TO CLAIMS 3-5

The Office Action objected to Claims 3-5 as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but stated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The subject matter of Claims 3-5 is incorporated into independent Claims 1, and 16-19, and Claims 3-5 are cancelled. Therefore, the objection is considered moot, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

II. ISSUES RELATING TO PRIOR ART

A. CLAIMS 1, 2, 11, 15-20, 24, AND 28

Claims 1, 2, 11, 15-20, 24, and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,944,663 to Schuba, et al. (“Schuba”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,321,339 to French, et al. (“French”). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1, and 16-19 have been placed in condition for allowance by incorporating into each of these independent claims the language of Claims 3-5 indicated by the Office Action to be allowable. As such, each of Claims 2, 11, 15, 20, 24, and 28, which depend either directly or indirectly from one of Claims 1 and 17-19, are allowable over the cited art for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which the claims depend.

The Office Action alleges that the Applicants' arguments presented in the response to the Final Office Action of December 23, 2008 ("Response") "have been previously addressed in the Final office action dated 12/23/08." Applicants respectfully disagree. Specifically, the Final Office Action does not address the argument that **the Final Office Action fails to support with evidence** the following assertions: (a) that it "would have been reasonable to expect any amount of computational work to be computed"; (b) that "it is reasonable to expect that if a user performs computations for one amount of work, they could perform any additional amount of computation of work"; and (c) that "it is reasonable to expect an amount of calculated work that is a culmination of different accumulated variables for a user to perform a proof of work on." In fact, many of the unaddressed arguments involve specific assertions made for the first time in the Final Office Action. Many other of Applicants' arguments were not addressed by the Final Office Action. Nevertheless, even if all of Applicants' arguments had been previously presented for review, the combination of Schuba and French (a) is improper under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), and (b) fails to teach or suggest the features of the version of Claim 1 prior to the current amendments.

The Office Action alleges that the Applicants' arguments presented in the response to the Final Office Action of December 23, 2008 ("Response") "have been previously addressed in the Final office action dated 12/23/08." Applicants respectfully disagree. For example, the Final Office Action does not address the following arguments: (a) that Schuba fails to disclose any work value at all included in a request for service from a user, as recited by Claim 1; (b) that the "authentication score" that the Office Action alleges is taught by French does not represent "a total amount of work previously performed by the user and accumulated across multiple prior requests by the user" recited by Claim 1; and (c) that the interpretation by the Office Action that the description in Schuba of a client solving a puzzle to be the "accumulated work value" of

Claim 1 is improper. Many other of Applicants' arguments were not addressed by the Final Office Action. Nevertheless, even if all of Applicants' arguments had been previously presented for review, the combination of Schuba and French (a) is improper under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), and (b) fails to teach or suggest the features of the version of Claim 1 prior to the current amendments.

B. CLAIMS 6-10, 12-14, 21-23, 25-27, AND 29-31

Claims 6-10, 12-14, 21-23, 25-27, and 29-31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schuba in view of French and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,197,639 to Juels, et al. ("Juels"). The rejection is respectfully traversed. Each of Claims 6-10, 12-14, 21-23, 25-27, and 29-31 depend either directly or indirectly from one of Claims 1 and 17-19, are allowable over the cited art for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which the claims depend. As previously stated, Claims 1 and 17-19 have been placed in condition for allowance based on incorporation into each of these independent claims the claim language indicated by the Office Action to be allowable.

III. CONCLUSIONS & MISCELLANEOUS

For the reasons set forth above, all of the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone relating to any issue that would advance examination of the present application.

A petition for extension of time, to the extent necessary to make this reply timely filed, is hereby made. If applicable, please charge our deposit account for the petition for extension of time fee. If any applicable fee is missing or insufficient, throughout the pendency of this application, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any applicable fees and to credit any overpayments to our Deposit Account No. 50-1302.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: March 11, 2009

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